

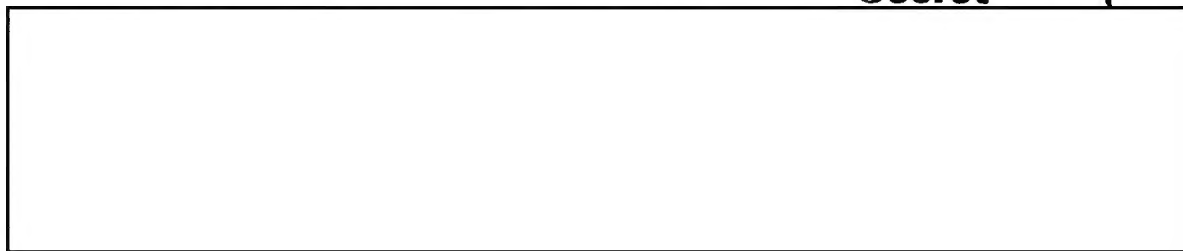
CIA/OCI/IM 2082/71
SECRET/SENSITIVE/NFD

FRENCH POLICY AND EUROPE'S FUTURE
19 OCTOBER 1971

01 OF 01

Secret

JAN



25X1

DIRECTORATE OF
INTELLIGENCE

Intelligence Memorandum

French Policy and Europe's Future

Secret

114

19 October 1971
No. 2082/71



WARNING

This document contains information affecting the national defense of the United States, within the meaning of Title 18, sections 793 and 794, of the US Code, as amended. Its transmission or revelation of its contents to or receipt by an unauthorized person is prohibited by law.

GROUP 1
EXCLUDED FROM AUTOMATIC
DOWNGRADING AND
DECLASSIFICATION

SECRET

25X1

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Directorate of Intelligence
19 October 1971

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

French Policy and Europe's Future

Introduction

Progress in West Germany's Ostpolitik and movement toward British entry into the European Communities have increased the problems France faces in the next phase of Europe's development. Decisions must be taken on: 1) the goals and timing of a possible Conference on European Security, 2) the relationship of such a conference to mutual and balanced force reductions, 3) the contours of an enlarged Economic Community (EC), and 4) the proper approach in the sensitive area of nuclear defense cooperation in Europe.

These issues present France with special problems as well as challenging opportunities to influence events vital to its national interests. On both force reductions and a Conference on European Security, France has adopted a policy which both differs from the views of its Western allies and has far-reaching implications for Europe. On the future of the EC, President Pompidou has begun to spell out more clearly the shape of the Europe he wants to help construct. In doing so, he wants to establish an image of himself as the master builder of a realistic alternative to supranationalist dreams. Exactly how the defense structure of the Europe envisioned by Pompidou is to be organized remains undefined, but recent French probes suggest that there is new interest in Paris in some form of Franco-British nuclear cooperation.

Note: This memorandum was produced solely by CIA. It was prepared by the Office of Current Intelligence and coordinated within the Directorate of Intelligence.

25X1

SECRET

SECRET

25X1

In moving to implement his European policy, Pompidou is acutely aware that the role of Paris in East-West detente is in danger of being eclipsed by Bonn's. As in the past the German problem is what ultimately most concerns French statesmen. In fact, France's posture on all the major issues facing Europe today is largely dictated by the need to find new means of dealing with Germany's economic dynamism and Chancellor Brandt's Ostpolitik. Another important factor is France's continuing distrust of Soviet motives and intentions.

-2-

25X1

SECRET

SECRET

25X1


Background

1. There is little doubt that 1969 was a major turning point in the history of Europe. Elections in West Germany and France brought to power Chancellor Willy Brandt and President George Pompidou, two statesmen who have made decisions that have greatly influenced the course of European events. Brandt's active pursuit of Ostpolitik has led to a lessening of East-West tensions, to a Berlin accord of historic import, and to improved relations between Germany and the Soviet Union. Pompidou's determination to bring the UK into the EC--despite De Gaulle's past vetoes--has led to a negotiated entry package and to the warmest period in Franco-British relations since the entente cordiale before World War I.

2. Brandt has done what former president Charles de Gaulle had said he alone could do for West Germany--deal with the Russians to produce a Soviet-German rapprochement. Pompidou has done what would probably have been impossible for De Gaulle--avoid a serious deterioration of French-German relations while Brandt's dramatic diplomacy began carving out for Germany the historic role that had been envisaged for France. In addition, Pompidou has pointed the way toward a European policy which, though less spectacular than Brandt's, does seek to provide a framework both for the development of Western Europe and for a permanent dialogue between Eastern and Western Europe. Whether Pompidou succeeds in his European policy depends on the willingness of France's NATO allies and the Soviet Union to accommodate French views on the critical issues of force reductions and a security conference.

French Views on Ostpolitik, Berlin, and European Security

3. France logically had no real alternative to public support of Brandt's Ostpolitik. The German policy was, after all, only an extension of De Gaulle's policy of "detente, entente, and cooperation." The communiqués following each of the Franco-German semi-annual meetings since 1969 have been careful to note President Pompidou's support for Germany's eastern policy.

-3-

25X1


SECRET

SECRET

25X1

4. All along, however, French policy makers have been apprehensive about the possible consequences of Ostpolitik. During the first half of 1970 this apprehension manifested itself most clearly in an extremely hard-line position at the Berlin talks. At a time when the other three Western powers were inclined to bargain with the Soviets, Paris was more insistent than ever on keeping the status quo. Was Paris' negativism a manifestation of fear that Brandt's Ostpolitik would enter a new and more successful phase, thus completely eclipsing France's claim to leadership of Western Europe? Was France trying to slow down the process of the emergent Bonn-Moscow detente? No French statesman has ever hinted that the answers to these questions were affirmative; this would have been an admission that Paris was acting to obstruct a policy that it publicly supported. There is little doubt, however, that obstruction was exactly what the French Foreign Ministry had in mind, although some of the harsher anti-German statements by French bureaucrats during this period were probably made without cabinet-level approval.

5. By the summer of 1970, Paris was acutely sensitive to the degree to which it had become isolated on the Berlin issue, and in the fall it shifted to support a rapid conclusion of a Berlin settlement. At the same time, the French also reversed their position on a Conference on European Security. They not only stopped warning of the dangers of a conference, but mounted an enthusiastic campaign in its favor. By December, French Foreign Minister Schumann was even strongly advocating that the Allies modify their position that a Berlin accord was a precondition to preparations for a security conference. Paris has since fallen back in line with the NATO view, but it is a measure of France's interest in a European conference that the French went as far as they did in late 1970.

25X1

-4-

SECRET

25X1

The "Ultimate French Nightmare"

6. What prompted France's major shift in late 1970 is not known with certainty. The most likely explanation, however, is that the French decided they had to move quickly toward a security conference if this were not to be overtaken by force reduction talks. This explanation raises two additional questions: 1) why has France been so fearful of force reduction talks, and 2) why does France so strongly favor the prior convening of a Conference on European Security?

25X6

a ranking Quai d'Orsay official has explained that the "ultimate French nightmare" is that force reductions might lead to a variation on the tragic course of European diplomacy during the interwar years. As the French reconstruct this period, the isolationist mood that swept the US following the Peace of Paris in 1919 led not only to US withdrawal from Europe but also to a relaxation of vigilance, determination, and military preparedness in Western Europe itself. In these circumstances, a single power--Nazi Germany--was able to learn, and by threats alone extended its sway over most of Central Europe by 1939.

9. Translating this historical scenario into present-day terms, the French portray force reduction talks as a front behind which the US, prompted again by isolationist sentiment, can reduce its commitment to West European security, removing significant numbers of American troops now in Europe. In this case the Soviet Union would be in a position to exploit a Western Europe perhaps

-5-

25X1

SECRET

SECRET

25X1

further weakened by a "wave of neutralism." By "neutralism" Paris apparently means an inclination to accept Moscow's lead. And what the French fear is that such a climate could ultimately result in the emergence of a German-Soviet axis that could come to dominate all of Europe. This long-range geopolitical analysis has many defects, but it does go a long way toward explaining why French statesmen--who take history very seriously--view force reduction talks with deep concern.

10. The French also fear that without substantial US conventional forces in Europe, Washington would be less inclined to use its nuclear power in a European crisis. One high French official recently said he could envision a situation in a few years when the US would "not push the button" in the event of a showdown with Moscow over Germany. Here again the French are haunted by the past. In the 1930s the French themselves failed to stand by an ally, Czechoslovakia, when it was under pressure from the dominant European power of the period. The French are undoubtedly aware that, by trying to delay force reduction talks, they run the risk that the US may unilaterally reduce its forces without corresponding reductions by the Soviets. They probably reason, however, that, given the ease with which Soviet forces could be redeployed in Eastern Europe, any Soviet reductions would be more apparent than real.

11. Paris also objects to the bloc-to-bloc context in which talks on mutual force reductions would be conducted. It is a basic tenet of French policy that negotiations between military organizations like NATO and the Warsaw Pact would decrease rather than increase the prospects for detente. Furthermore, the French reason that because they do not participate fully in Alliance affairs, their views would carry less weight than West Germany's in NATO discussions. Paris therefore prefers an alternative forum.

-6-

25X1

SECRET

SECRET

25X1

A "Conference on European Cooperation"?

12. Although the initiative for a Conference on European Security came from Moscow, Paris has been conducting an active diplomatic campaign in recent months to discredit force reduction talks and to build support for the early convening of such a conference. It is essential to note, however, that France has its own special view of the kind of conference that should be held. If it were to be strictly limited to "security"--as its name would imply--it is likely that it would hold no more appeal for Paris than other talks on force reductions.

13. Paris is trying hard to ensure that the emphasis of any security conference will be on "cooperation" rather than "security," on political and cultural matters rather than on military questions. During his recent trip to Bulgaria, Foreign Minister Schumann said that the "theme of cooperation" would be "more important" than that of security. Schumann stressed the importance of exploiting the political atmosphere created by the Berlin accords to move forward quickly toward a conference.

14. Paris believes that the first session of the conference should be held as early in 1972 as possible and that bilateral talks to make arrangements should start now. The meeting which would be held in Helsinki--would include the ministers of all European nations, Communist and non-Communist, plus the US and Canada. As envisaged by the French, the conference would appoint a committee of direction composed of deputy foreign ministers. This committee would have three or four subcommittees working in the areas of economic cooperation, cultural and technical exchange, and security. A second conference of foreign ministers, which the French hope would be held in Geneva, would then consider the papers produced by the subcommittees. The second meeting would decide whether further conferences or a "permanent organization" would offer the better prospect for continuing cooperation in Europe.

-7-

25X1

SECRET

SECRET

25X1

15. Schumann's presentation in Bulgaria suggests that Paris now views a security conference as an instrument for furthering the policy line laid down by De Gaulle--"detente, entente, and cooperation." Thus a meeting in the French mold would evolve into some form of permanent organization designed to further European-wide cooperation in a variety of technical, cultural, and economic fields.

16. If Paris were to have its way, a security conference would so order priorities that military affairs were at the bottom of the list. Mutual force reductions--or any other military issues--would be considered only after the conference had been transformed, first, into something like a Conference on European Cooperation and, subsequently, into an Organization of European Cooperation. This new organization would then act to promote mutual trust in Europe so that eventually Europe could confidently consider arms reduction.

17. Until that time, French statesmen argue, the West European nations must prepare for the day when the US withdraws its forces from Europe by strengthening--rather than reducing--their own military forces or, as a minimum, by agreeing not to reduce the percentage of GNP devoted to defense expenditures over the next few years. This policy would allow the nations of Western Europe to remain in a position of strength while the sincerity of Moscow's seeming desire for a broad-based policy of European detente is tested.

18. The French will continue to fight a rear-guard action to defer force reduction talks in hopes that quick progress will be made toward a Conference on European Security. Although they will not completely boycott preparatory talks on force reductions in NATO, they may at some point adopt obstructionist tactics. Such a course is unlikely seriously to impede the current pace of preparations for talks on mutual force reductions

-8-

25X1

SECRET

SECRET

25X1

because the other allies are anxious to push ahead in order to forestall a possible unilateral US draw-down of its European troops. France might adopt a compromise position calling for a subcommittee of a security conference to assume responsibility for force reduction talks. This is one of the many approaches now being considered by NATO countries. "Security" would still not be subordinated to "cooperation" as much as the French would like, but the arrangement would be a face-saving formula and potentially a means of slowing the pace toward force reduction negotiations in NATO. It also would appeal to many European states, including the neutrals, because they would be able to participate in discussions of US and Soviet troop levels.

19. French fears regarding force reductions and a possible German-Soviet axis may be exaggerated, but they are an important element in current French thinking. Also important is France's rivalry with West Germany for the leadership of both Western Europe and for East-West detente; an early Conference on European Security is identified in diplomatic circles as "the French position," while Bonn is backing force reduction talks as "the vital next step" in detente. The French probably feel that a security conference offers a way of influencing Bonn outside the NATO context. Finally, if force reduction talks occur in a subcommittee of a security conference, the appearance of bloc-to-bloc talks would be diminished.

Nuclear and Other Defense Cooperation

20. Another area critical to the future of Europe is military and nuclear cooperation. Talk of Franco-British nuclear cooperation has gone on in a low key for years. It got a shot in the arm after Edward Heath was elected Britain's prime minister. While a member of the opposition, Heath had written a preface to one of his books in which he advocated in general terms a defense arrangement with Paris which would involve collaboration in the nuclear weapons sphere. In July 1970, Foreign Secretary Douglas-Home sounded out the French on this

25X1

SECRET

~~SECRET~~

25X1

idea. At the time Foreign Minister Schumann showed little interest, noting that France's nuclear program was well advanced and that Paris needed no technical aid.

21. Paris left open the door for further discussions, and the concept continued to be discussed. Soon after Schumann's negative response, President Pompidou remarked that Franco-British "nuclear agreements" were "probably desirable." In the spring of 1971, Dutch Foreign Minister Luns suggested publicly that, in order to facilitate a positive French attitude on the EC entry negotiations, Britain should make the "gesture" of offering to share some "nuclear secrets" with the French. Luns also stated that Heath would soon present to Pompidou a plan for a joint UK-French nuclear force and that this would lead to progress in the entry negotiations. London immediately denied that the EC enlargement negotiations in Brussels were connected with "defense or nuclear issues."

25X6

-10-

25X1

~~SECRET~~

25X6

Approved For Release 2005/08/22 : CIA-RDP85T00875R001100100122-0

Approved For Release 2005/08/22 : CIA-RDP85T00875R001100100122-0

SECRET

25X1

27. Nevertheless, the direction of French European policy suggests that at some point Paris will seek serious talks on an arrangement for the defense of Western Europe which would have as its cornerstone Anglo-French nuclear power. This is the trump card that Paris holds in its game of trying to keep Bonn from drifting too far in the direction of Moscow. The French may reason that the mere prospect of talks--especially if the US stated publicly that it favored some form of Anglo-French cooperation--would bring Bonn knocking on Paris' door to ask for a role in the plans. And, after some hesitation, Paris would probably find some format for admitting the Germans.

28. In keeping with France's practice of seeking as many ways as possible to influence West Germany, Paris has over the last year intensified its efforts to further non-nuclear, bilateral military cooperation with Bonn. A number of cooperative weapons projects begun in the early 1960s--the Roland surface-to-air missile, and the MILAN and HOT anti-tank missiles--are scheduled to become operational in the near future. Two additional projects--the Alpha-Jet aircraft and guided missile patrol boats--have been under way since 1970, though both are still plagued by technical difficulties. Several space and non-military nuclear cooperation projects are nearing completion. In all of these projects France has taken the initiative. The German response has for the most part been less than enthusiastic, but German Defense Minister Helmut Schmidt stated publicly in early 1971 that "military cooperation between France and Germany is closer today than ever before."

Pompidou: "Europe is What I Say It Is"

29. Closely related to French policy on mutual and balanced force reductions, a Conference on European Security, nuclear defense cooperation, and Franco-German relations is the question of the proper shape for an enlarged EC. Pompidou contended himself with oracular declarations on Europe during his first years in office, perhaps to assuage traditional Gaullist feelings on the lifting of the

-12-

25X1

SECRET

SECRET

25X1

French vote on UK entry. At the beginning of 1971, however, he began to spell out his concept of Europe. Since that time he has had rather a lot to say about his "European Europe" and seems to believe, as the Economist once summed up his views, that "Europe is what I say it is."

30. Pompidou contends that Europe has its own unique "personality." "To be European," he stated in a press conference in May 1971, "is to distinguish Europe from the rest, from Asia, the Soviet world, and America also." He went on to stress that this did not mean that Europe should cut itself off from the US, only that it should avoid becoming "American" by retaining its own identity in monetary, political, military, and cultural affairs.

31. In the monetary sphere, Pompidou wants to create a common European currency to "furnish a balance to the dollar." On political and military matters, Pompidou favors detente with the East and a reduction of "the rigidity of our allegiance as regards America." He has said, "France is free of certain Atlantic ties for special reasons, and this will perhaps shortly be the general sentiment in Europe."

32. The French President puts special stress on the need for a separate European culture, or "civilization." "Europe distinguishes itself," Pompidou argues, "in relation to the United States... on the level of civilization. Our civilization has now taken an industrial form which has its roots in the United States. Though we risk having to follow their example, we must try to create a different form of civilization. Europe is well placed for this because it has a diverse humanistic past which places a high priority on man, while America considers him more as an instrument of production."

33. Related closely to Pompidou's call for a unique European civilization is his emphasis on the French language, which he and many Frenchmen consider a symbol of the country's (and the continent's) prestige and power. To see the French language decline

-13-

25X1

SECRET

SECRET

25X1

[REDACTED]

in influence is to see both France and Europe diminished in the eyes of the world, he believes. For Pompidou, French is more "European" than English. In a statement pointing to the need for continued use of French in the EC after British entry, Pompidou explained that English is "the language of America in the eyes of the whole world," implying that Europe will not be Europe unless the prestige of the French language matches the march of European influence in the world.

34. Pompidou looks forward to a confederation of West European states with a joint system of decision making. Such a confederation would be better able to resist outside pressures, from the US and the Soviet Union, and would respect the "national personality" of each member state. Unlike De Gaulle, Pompidou thinks that no single state--including France and especially West Germany--can or should dominate Europe. His key objective is to make Europe a real third force in world affairs, while at the same time keeping German power in check by the weight of the Paris-London axis. In pursuing these goals, he will continue to place French national interests ahead of all others, but to a far greater extent than De Gaulle, he sees the advantages for France of working within the EC framework.

35. Since Pompidou became President, he has favored the establishment of a Ministry of European Affairs in France. He now believes that such a "European minister" should be appointed in every EC country. Eventually these ministers would presumably become part of a European government. Until then, Pompidou insists, important decisions must be taken only by unanimous consent of the member states.

36. It is not at all certain that Pompidou, in fact, would ever accept the authority of a European government--confederal or otherwise--that seriously impinged on French sovereignty. But the same might be said of all the Community members and applicants. The important thing for the immediate future is that Pompidou is more willing than De Gaulle to cooperate with the rest of Europe on technical, financial, economic, and cultural matters.

-14-

25X1

SECRET

SECRET

25X1

This may lead to increased de facto unity on a number of levels, but it would certainly stop short of what Pompidou has called the "dreams" and "surrenders" of the kind of supranational Europe envisioned by Europeans like Jean Monnet.

Still a Europe from the Atlantic to the Urals?

37. In a television interview in mid-1971, Pompidou dwelt at length on his concept of Europe. The President spoke of Western Europe as "this little, fragile, and menaced peninsula," situated between two "immense powers," the Soviet Union and the United States. He went on to say that the nations of Western Europe must pool their resources and potentialities to meet the challenge of the superpowers. Although France has excellent relations with Moscow, he said, there is no question of allowing Western Europe to be "absorbed by Soviet Russia."

38. Notable in Pompidou's presentation was the absence of stress on some of the basic premises of De Gaulle's European policy. He spoke neither of "detente, entente, or cooperation" nor of a "Europe from the Atlantic to the Urals." Indeed, Pompidou seemed to be suggesting that De Gaulle's long-sought goal of reconciling Europe's two halves was less urgent than organizing the Western half so that it would not be wiped out by the power of the East. "Not only have the questions of East-West relations and of 'detente,' been neglected," wrote respected Le Monde commentator Michel Tatu, "but Pompidou seemed to affirm the existence of a 'Soviet world' which is scarcely capable of being influenced by the West."

39. Although partially accurate, Tatu's analysis fails to take into consideration the enthusiasm of French statesmen for a Conference on European Security. It is significant, however, that there is enough ambiguity in French policy statements to allow even informed observers to believe that France is now putting West European construction ahead of detente with the East. At least one high French

25X1

SECRET

SECRET

25X1

[REDACTED]

official has even conceded that there is inconsistency in advocating detente through a security conference and opposing the force reductions that are a logical outcome of detente. Pompidou's explanation is that, although France favors detente, it wants it without any reduction in Western Europe's defense capability.

40. Despite inconsistencies and ambiguities, certain aspects of French policy seem clear. France wants the UK in the EC and is seeking ways to ensure that London will line up with Paris on a number of issues, including nuclear defense cooperation and a confederal structure for Europe. Paris is apprehensive over the possibility that force reduction talks might result in a reduction of US forces and an increase in the influence of Bonn and Moscow in West European affairs. Paris views a Conference on European Security as a way to delay force reductions and to provide a forum in which France's views would carry more weight than in direct NATO - Warsaw Pact talks. The French also see a security conference as a first step toward a permanent organization that would in effect institutionalize the process of European detente and overcome the division of Europe into blocs. Should a permanent organization evolve, Paris could claim that it symbolized nothing less than the "Europe from the Atlantic to the Urals" envisioned by De Gaulle.

25X1

-16-

25X1

SECRET